

*Amendments to the Specification*

1. Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 21, which starts with "In accordance with", with the following amended paragraph:

In accordance with embodiments of the present invention, determining if the user is a valid user, involves reading a user credential cookie, requesting a user identification (ID) and password, receiving the user ID and password and validating the user's identity. Where, validating the user's identity, involves authenticating the user ID and password with the credential cookie using a local authenticating mechanism, for example, an operating system, and if the user ID and password are authenticated, generating a password cookie for the user using a shared secret key, otherwise, the user ID and password are ~~re-requesting~~ re-requested from the user.